

10 Great Second-hand and Vintage Shops in Madrid

Fed up of queues in Primark, everyone having the same dress from Zara, and the unsustainable waste produced by fast fashion? Ditch the high-street chains and get ready to rummage! From cheap and cheerful thrift shops to high-end boutiques, there's something for everyone when it comes to second-hand and vintage shops in Madrid.

1. Vintalogy



- [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [Website](#)
- Address: Calle de Atocha, 10
- Opening Hours: 11am-10pm every day

A good place to start is Vintalogy, Europe's largest vintage

store, set up by the team behind the [Mercado de Motores](#). Forget delving into bargain bins; think of Vintalogy as a vintage department store. They make the most of the huge floor space and high ceilings with great merchandising, making it easy to find what you're looking for. The clothes are divided neatly into sections, and sizes are easy to find. If you fancy a splurge, there is also a separate room for luxury and designer clothing, all in mint condition and, like the rest of the store, beautifully presented.

The shop building is emblematic. Vintalogy replaced the historic cloth shop Sobrino de J. Martí Prats and the original signage has been preserved, in keeping with the philosophy of repurposing, reusing, and rediscovering gems from past eras. As you might have guessed from the late opening hours, **they often host events and DJs.**

2. La Mona Checa Vintage Market and Art



- [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [Website](#)
- Address: Calle Velarde, 2
- Opening Hours: 11:30am-9pm Mon-Sat; 11:30am-3pm/4pm-9pm Sun

La Mona Checa is a cute boutique (with an equally cute name) on Calle Velarde, a mecca for vintage shoppers in Madrid. Thanks to its bright sign and distinctive monkey logo, you can't miss it walking past. Once inside, you could be at the circus, thanks to the quirky red-and-white, striped, fabric that decorates the ceiling, like the inside of a tent. They have a great selection of brightly-patterned shirts for men and women, some great party dresses, and sunglasses of all shapes and sizes (I even managed to find a pair to fit my tiny head).

3. Malasaña Vintage Outlet

- Address: Calle San Vicente Ferrer, 39
- Opening Hours: 12pm-3pm/5pm-8pm Mon-Sat

If you're looking for a bargain, this is your place. This outlet stocks clothes from La Mona Checa and Biba Vintage, all at up to 70% off. It's a true, no-frills, thrift shop experience, with no changing rooms and clothes racks full of stock. But it's not hard to find something you'll like. I walked out with two shirts and a skirt for under €10.

4. Magpie



- [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [Website](#)
- Address: Calle Velarde, 3 and Calle Manuela Malasaña, 19
- Opening Hours: 11:30am-9pm Mon-Sat; 12pm-9pm Sun

With a cavernous space on Calle Velarde and a small, newly-opened shop on Calle Manuela de Malasaña, Magpie Vintage has all the clothes you could wish for. There is an extensive range of both men's and women's clothing, everything from

jeans and sportswear to sequinned mini-dresses and floor-length evening gowns. I also love the range of accessories and jewellery. The prices are more than reasonable, with most items a bit less than they would be in your average high-street shop.

5. Heritage and Rare

- [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [Website](#)
- Address: Calle del Pez, 36
- Opening Hours: 11am-3pm/5pm-9pm Mon-Sat; 12pm-2pm Sun

One for the vintage purists, Heritage and Rare stands out for its beautiful, authentic, and well-cared-for vintage pieces. All items carry a label specifying the country and decade they were made in. From delicate Italian lingerie to heavy wool coats, everything is in perfect condition and shows no signs of use. A lot of the stock has never been used, having been rescued after shop closures. The shop is small but manages to squeeze in a good selection of men's and women's clothes, including shoes and bags.

6. Alphaville



- [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#)
- Address: Calle Velarde, 7 y 16 and Calle del León, 29
- Opening Hours: 11am-9pm every day

Alphaville has several locations, with two shops on Calle Velarde and another on Calle del Leon. On Calle Velarde, one shop is dedicated solely to vintage sportswear and the other has a bit of everything. Good for winter coats and shoes, my favourite of the three is the shop on Calle del Leon. With its cosy atmosphere and retro furniture, I sometimes feel like I'm shopping in someone's living room.

7. Humana, Malasaña

- [Website](#)
- Address: Calle de la Corredera Baja de San Pablo, 23
- Opening Hours: 10am-pm every day

Bear with me on this one... With shops across the country, Humana is the biggest second-hand chain in Spain, but it doesn't have a reputation for being the most stylish. Think Humana and you're more likely to be picturing frumpy

throwaways than quirky vintage finds.

However, the Malasaña branch, on Calle de la Corredera Baja de San Pablo, has a carefully selected collection. There is a mix of good-quality, on-trend, high-street items, and vintage stock. It's well worth a browse, whether you want to pick up some of last season's fashion at a fraction of the price or a more individual vintage piece. They get new stock regularly, **as the best items from the other branches are brought here.** The last time I went, there was even a vintage wedding dress!

8. El Rincón de Tía Jo





- [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [Website](#)
- Address: Calle Velarde, 4
- Opening Hours: 12pm-3pm/4pm-9pm Mon-Thurs; 12pm-9pm Fri-Sat; 1pm-9pm Sun

El Rincón de Tía Jo is my favourite second-hand shop on Calle Velarde. It seems like a little, narrow shop but is much bigger once you get inside. With a distinctly less hipster vibe than the other shops on this street, the best vintage stock tends to be in the room right at the back. In another small room, they have vintage furniture and knick-knacks. The selection of coats is great; I bought my beloved, black, fake-fur jacket here. Most importantly, the staff are friendly, helpful, and always give good advice about what suits you.

9. The Loop



- [Facebook](#), [Website](#)
- Address: Calle Velarde, 1
- Opening Hours: 11:30am-9pm Mon-Sat; 11:30am-3pm/4pm-8:30 Sun

Banish thoughts of rifling through musty cast-offs. The Loop's tagline is "Fresh Vintage for Fresh People." Though "Fresh Vintage" is a bit of an oxymoron, I think they mean that all their vintage clothes are on trend, in good condition, and clean. The stock is well selected, with well-known brands like Moschino, Armani, Valentino, Calvin Klein, and Levi's. The shop is bright, modern, and feels more like a quirky designer boutique than a thrift store.

10. Johnny and Velvet



- [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#)
- Address: Calle Embajadores, 42
- Opening Hours: 11am-2pm/5:30pm-9pm Tues-Sat; 11am-4pm Sun

Johnny and Velvet, named after the owner's two greyhounds, is perfect if you want to pick up some €20 Levi's jeans. It's a bit away from the main hub of vintage shops in Madrid, located south of the centre on Calle Embajadores, making it a good choice if you don't feel like facing the bustle of Malasaña. The clothes are quirky, original, and reasonably priced.

By Ellen
Fouweather (*Instagram: [@efouwee](#)*)

Know any other great second-hand and vintage shops in Madrid? If so, let us know!

5 Work-friendly Cafes with Great Wi-Fi in Madrid

While setting up a home office in a café is typically not part of Madrid's culture, there is a large population of international people and students living here who enjoy finding places where they can spend hours on end with their laptops.

As there is an abundance of quaint, work-friendly cafés in the city, the struggle primarily lies in finding one with strong Wi-Fi. So here's a list of lovely cafes with great Wi-Fi in Madrid. They all boast a comfortable working space and delicious coffee beverages to help you get your work done!

[Lolina Vintage Café](#)



As its name suggests, this cozy café will instantly make you feel as though you've stepped back in time. Its vintage décor, comfortable sofas, and lamps create a comfortable, cozy atmosphere that invites all to sit and do work. There is an upstairs and downstairs area, both with plenty of space and tables. The Wi-Fi is provided upon placing your order and is quite strong, almost never fading out. Depending on how crowded the café is, the Wi-Fi may be slightly weaker downstairs. Nevertheless, **Lolina Vintage Café's Wi-Fi is definitely dependable for those who need to work online.**

This café offers a variety of dishes and coffee beverages, including vegan milk for individuals of all dietary restrictions to enjoy. Once you've finished your work, the signature cocktails may be just the post-work treat that you and your friends are looking for.

- *Photo from* [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** Calle del Espíritu Santo, 9
- **Metro:** Tribunal

[HanSo Café](#)



If you prefer to work more so in the “hustle and bustle” of the city, you’ll love the trendy HanSo Café. Located on Calle del Pez, this café is famous for its picture-worthy coffee beverages that taste just as good as they look. While this

café has good Wi-Fi, you may find that it is better suitable for light work assignments, where peace and quiet are not a necessity. With the visually appealing coffee beverages that attracts the crowds, HanSo Café is definitely not a substitute for a library. Nevertheless, if you're looking to switch up your work place, this is a fabulous café to explore both alone and with friends.

- *Photo from* [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** Calle del Pez, 20
- **Metro:** Noviciado

[La Bicicleta](#)



Perhaps you prefer natural light or people watching while you work. If so, you'll love the bar window seating at La Bicicleta that looks over the charming Madrid street and square. If the window seats are taken when you arrive, there are plenty of large tables in the café to spread out and do your work.

You'll find many people working from their laptops in this café, taking advantage of the strong Wi-Fi and top quality 100% Arabic coffee that is offered. If you're in need of a quick pick-me-up meal while working, you may treat yourself to one of La Bicicleta's delicious tapas dishes. Also read our

[previous article about La Bicicleta.](#)

- [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** Plaza de San Ildefonso, 9
- **Metro:** Tribunal

[Café de la Luz](#)



If you're in need of a cozy place that feels as though you're in your own home living room, Café de la Luz may become your new work place of choice. Located on Calle de la Puebla, this charming café offers a couple of tables along the windows, bar seating, comfortable sofas, and a wood-burning stove fireplace. The warm, comfortable atmosphere that this café boasts will surely eliminate any work-related stress you may have. The reliable Wi-Fi connection will also make working a breeze, where you won't have to worry about losing connection at any moment while feeling productive.

- [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** Calle de la Puebla, 8
- **Metro:** Chueca / Gran Vía

[La Colectiva Café](#)



University students will love La Colectiva Café, which offers the same working atmosphere as a campus study center does. Upon entering the café, it may not seem like much, with only a few bench seats and tables. However, if you go downstairs, you will find plenty of space with large tables and comfortable sofas.

Many people choose to work at La Colectiva Café because it is very quiet downstairs, making it quite easy to focus. The strong Wi-Fi allows you to do anything from searching online to enjoying a Netflix study break. While the menu may be

slightly more on the pricey side compared to other cafes, it may be well worth it if you're searching for a work-friendly, comfortable space to complete your tasks.

- [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** Calle Francisco de Rojas, 9
- **Metro:** Bilbao

While there are numerous cafes and quaint locations in Madrid to work at, these five destinations will surely inspire you to get quality work done without the hassle of having to seek out strong Wi-Fi. With this list of cafes, you'll no longer have to worry about arriving to the café, ordering your drink, and setting up your computer, only to discover that the Wi-Fi isn't strong.

Thanks to these work-friendly cafés with great WiFi in Madrid, you can enjoy feeling part of the vibrant city while accomplishing your daily online tasks and treating yourself to delicious coffee beverages!

By Haley Grant

Falafeleria – authors of La Hummuseria's second success story

If it were a bestseller then authors of [La Hummuseria](#) have written another success story: [Falafeleria](#). Simplicity and *sabor* are the keys and if, like me, you suffer from indecision and are overwhelmed by the sight of a long menu, then this is your place.



There are three options to choose from. Each one is to be the contents of a delicious, home-baked pita. However, the main character of this tale has to be the falafel. I would love to

tell you the ingredients but when I asked, I was told they were a highly guarded secret recipe, as with the hummus. Whatever it is, they've done it right.



This is no resemblance to my own flaky, dry chickpea ball attempts. There's texture, body and a finish of herbs. This

falafel could well be eaten on its own. But in addition you get the garnish, the tahini dressing and of course the hummus.

Built on a street food-style joint in central Malasaña, you can eat in or take out. But this is no fast food pop up. It's healthy and fulfilling and on top of it all, they encourage you to recycle.



Oh and I almost forgot, they have a genius wrap holder for the table. All embarrassment spared if this is a first date destination. I'm heading back to try options two and three.

Photos courtesy of Lotem Gaziel, co-founder of La Hummuseria & Falafeleria

By Alice Josselyn

Falafeleria

- [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** Calle Santa Barbera 4
- **Metro:** Tribunal or Chueca
- **Open:** Tuesday – Saturday 13h-23h30; Sunday 13h-18h

Also check out [La Hummuseria!](#)

Unleash your inner kid at The Playground

Ever miss recess? Family game nights? Dedicating a whole day to just having a good time?

I don't blame you—**adulthood is hard**. Sometimes all I want to do is go back to being a kid, when I could completely lose myself in a game of cards or kickball and momentarily forget about the rest of the world. I miss the carefree way I made new friends and laughed so hard I couldn't breathe—even with people I'd only just met.

Apparently, I'm not the only one suffering from this particular brand of nostalgia. A few years ago, the lovely and talented Majida Mundial (a longtime Madrid resident who hails from New York) decided to do something about it.

She created [Let's Go Ánimo](#), a company dedicated to helping people have fun, meet new friends, and release the inner child that lives on inside us all.



Majida, the founder of Let's Go Ánimo, cracks up with The Playground participants.

Every month, Let's Go Ánimo hosts [The Playground](#), a night of board games and friendly competition that's every bit as fun as it sounds. At first glance it may seem like your average expat networking night; it's held on Thursday evenings on a trendy Malasaña street, everyone speaks English, and yes, there's wine involved. But the similarities end there.

When you walk in the door, you'll be placed on a team with other attendees who you'll compete with throughout the night. The games are different every time—you might play Jenga, Scattergories, Cards Against Humanity, Limbo, Twister, or an endless number of other classics. The winner of each game is awarded points for their team, and at the end of the evening there's a challenge round to crown the overall champion. **Expect plenty of fun, prizes, and unlimited surprises.**



A fierce Twister competition puts players' balance to the test.

Of course, there are some things that set The Playground apart from the game nights of your youth: namely, alcohol. The **€10 entry fee** includes a drink and a few small tapas, and you can buy more throughout the night if you're still hungry (or thirsty). Beer, wine and *tinto de verano* are usually on offer.

If you're shy or nervous about meeting new people, The Playground will leave you no choice but to let loose and get out of your comfort zone. Awkward icebreakers, dance-offs, improv activities... everything is fair game.

Pro tip: you'll have more fun if you go all out and really get into it—apathy and introversion might be acceptable at a normal bar or networking night, but here they just won't fly.

In addition to the monthly Playground events, Let's Go Ánimo organizes special activities and celebrations throughout the year. Sometimes there's a particular theme; the Christmas edition held in December featured a white elephant gift exchange, an ugly sweater contest, and no shortage of holiday cheer.



Participants strut their stuff in an ugly Christmas sweater fashion show.

Other past events have included picnics in the park and Thanksgiving-themed fun. Let's Go Ánimo also offers corporate [team building workshops](#), and Majida even teaches [Sevillanas dance classes](#) in English, if that's your thing!

Stay up to date on upcoming events by joining the brand new Facebook group, [The High-Vibe Tribe](#). According to Majida, **"This group is being created to build an international family-like community of passionate people all over the world who believe that being an adult does not have to equal living a dull life, and that living the fulfilling life you dream of is not only possible but necessary!"**

So if you're tired of the same old language exchanges and afterwork meet-ups, and you want to try something totally new and unique, mark your calendar for the next edition of The

Playground—or any of Let's Go Ánimo's events—and get ready to have the time of your life.

Info

- [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) & [Website](#)
 - **Location:** El Salón del Artista, Calle de la Palma, 50
 - **Metro:** Noviciado & Tribunal
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Varsovia Bar – Cocktail o'clock in the run-up to Christmas

It's safe to say that bars in Malasaña are pretty much ten a penny. There's possibly more bars than beards, and that's saying something. What's not so common though, is to find a bar that looks super appealing from the street, yet for one reason or another you're yet to make it inside.

This had been the case with [Varsovia](#) for literally, months. I'd strolled past it almost daily either on the way to work or the gym, however, I'd never actually been. So feeling high on hump day vibes last Wednesday, I decided to suggest it to a friend for a long overdue catch up, and to see if what was on the inside was as engaging as the exterior.



It was rammed. This might be partly due to Madrileños being on a countdown to Christmas and therefore not really needing to have their arm twisted when it comes to a post work *copa*. But even at 8pm (a slightly weird time to be boozing here) – not quite after work, definitely not post dinner – but the atmosphere was buzzing.

We quickly discovered that it was one of the waitresses' birthdays so a chorus of *Cumpleaños Feliz* rang out as we entered, and a cake appeared from nowhere – which the lovely Virginia even offered to share. First impressions count and the immediate feeling was one of friendliness and very much that it was a local bar, for local people.

The cocktail list is extensive but we thought we'd pace ourselves and start with a gin. Virginia kindly recommended that we sample a Nordes (one of my faves hailing from the North West of Spain) which even came with a little tapa of manchego cheese.



I'm always beyond thrilled when you're offered a food freebie in Madrid, as whilst it remains commonplace in the south of Spain, it's a lot less common in the capital unless you're offered some bog standard olives. Manchego cheese has become a cheese of choice for me and for this reason alone I was delighted.

Gins slurped, we thought we'd then sample some of the hard stuff. A gin cocktail that was nameless (we explained that it was our spirit soulmate) and we were promptly presented with a concoction that was gin based but laced with juicy apple flavours.

Cocktails in hand, we were able to chat whilst appreciating the background tunes which weren't offensively loud , as can

so often be the case. I was told that come weekends, DJs frequently take to the decks and kick-out doesn't happen until 3am – leaving you plenty of time to get the party started.



Varsovia seemed to offer something for everyone. Cocktails for those looking for some for weekday (or weekend) glamour. As well as vermouth for those who like their tipples to be a little more traditional.

Don't make my mistake of walking on by. Stick your head in and give it a try (apologies for the terrible rhyme, clearly there's a frustrated poet in me itching to get out).

Varsovia Info

- [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** Calle San Andrés 33
- **Metro:** Bilbao

That's Amore at Aió

Following numerous debates, with numerous friends, I've come to the conclusion that Tuesdays are officially THE worst day of the week. Mondays, well, I can just about grin and bear them – especially if you're still all warm and fuzzy from weekend based fun.

But by Tuesday, the forthcoming weekend just feels way out of reach and if you're like me, it's the day when you decide to haul yourself back to the gym – usually after a couple of days of complete over indulgence.

In light of this newly held belief, a good friend of mine suggested that we should always have dinner together on a Tuesday; purely to take the sting out of its tail. **So last Tuesday we found ourselves happily ensconced at [Aió](#), my local Italian in Malasaña that could give any spaghetti serving spot in Sardinia a run for its money.**



To kick off proceedings we both opted for a Negroni to transport us to sunnier days spent in Italy, rather than a somewhat chilly and crisp November evening in Madrid. The spritz alone raised a smile and that was before the eating part of the evening had commenced, of which there was a lot.

Where Italian food is concerned, I can exercise next to no self restraint – suffice to say, we feasted. With such a tempting menu on offer, boasting all the well loved (and well known) classics, it would have been hard not to.



Like many other semi foodies, I've found myself arguing with pretty much every Spaniard on Earth regarding the fiercely coveted title of 'the best cuisine in the world' – because of course, it comes as no surprise that Spaniards (in general) feel that they deserve the crown.



But I beg of you (and please don't kill me for saying so) that in my humble opinion, Italian food is where it's at. Nobody does comfort food better and on a Winters evening, a big bowl of pasta feels like being enveloped in a hearty hug; and I'm all for a cuddle when it's cold.



We split a **burrata** and a **carpaccio** because quite frankly, any good Italian joint worth its salt should be able to deliver deliciousness on both. Aió didn't disappoint, both were inhaled without a second thought in all their luscious, lovely glory.



The starters were followed up with a glorious **gorgonzola based pasta dish** that was **peppered with prawns** and a **quattro formaggi pizza** (half of which came home with me in a doggy bag) as my eyes had clearly been bigger than my belly at this point.



Saying that though, is anyone capable of saying no to a cheeky

pudding? I'm evidently not, as we rounded off the previously nicknamed 'Bluesday Tuesday' with a **tiramisu** and a **gin tonic** for the road. We left with vows of friendship having been reaffirmed, appetites having been satiated and the edge having been well and truly taken off a potentially terrible Tuesday.

Aiό's charm is found in the home cooked feel of the food and the fizz in their Aperol spritz.

Info

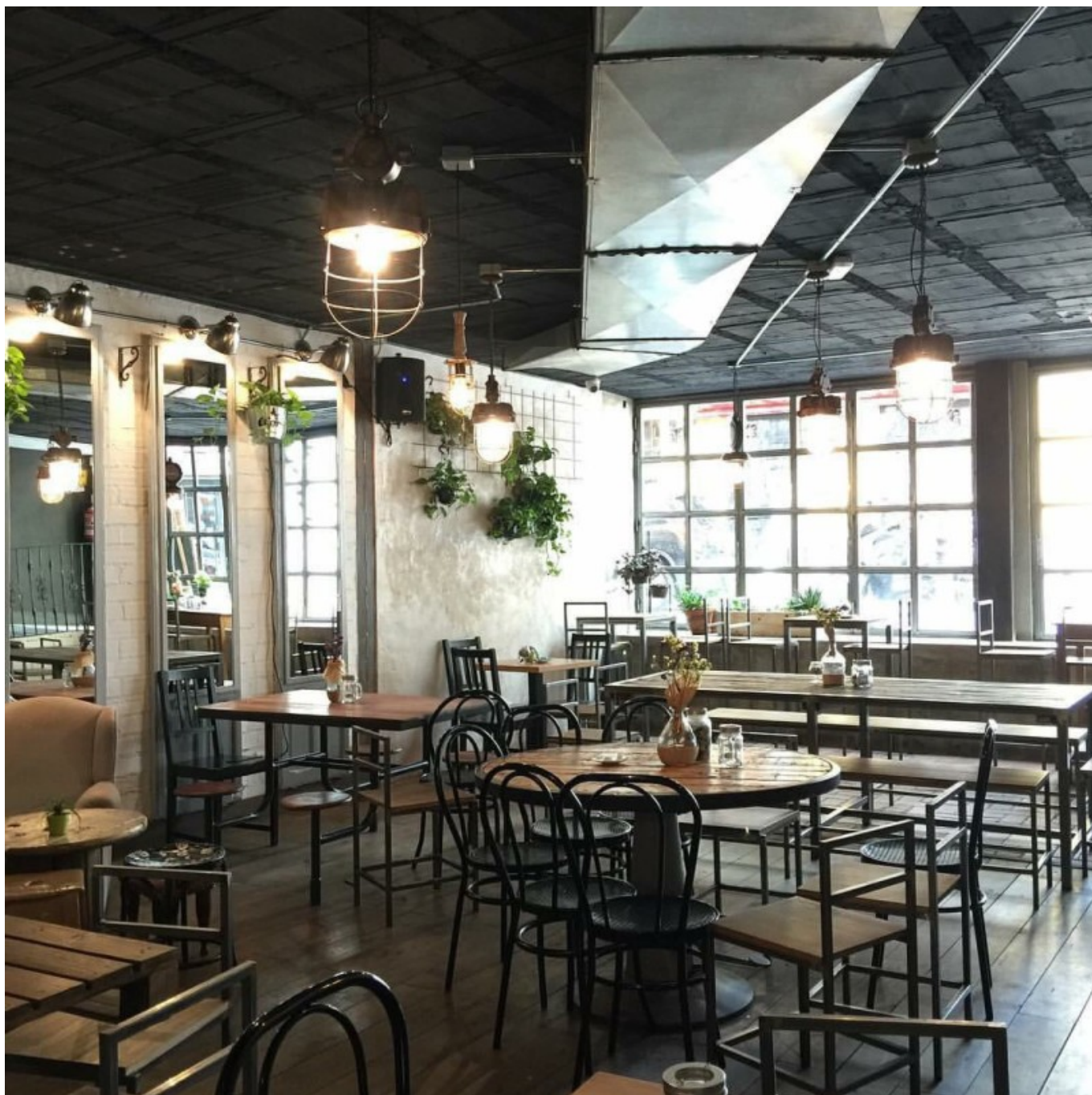
- [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#)
- **Address:** [Calle Corredera Baja de San Pablo, 25](#)
- **Phone:** 910 096 469

Also check out a previous [Naked Madrid post on Aiό](#)

Slow down at Slow Mex Madrid

Julie Andrews once sang about *these are a few of my favorite things* and if I were to pen some similar lyrics they would read along the lines of: *margaritas, tacos and anything with a bit of spice*.

In light of this, a long Saturday lunch spent at [Slow Mex](#) wasn't exactly a hardship. **A low key Mexican joint on Calle San Vicente Ferrer, that does a very nice sideline in craft beers** is the ideal place to bunker down for the afternoon now that coat season is well and truly upon us in Madrid.



Slow Mex has a big open space that feels slightly reminiscent to a pub back in Blighty (again, this could be thanks to the array of beers on tap). It feels like an unpretentious neighbour who invites you over and makes you feel instantly at home.

As it's essentially a mecca for all things Mexican, all the standard offerings are present on the menu. **Tacos, nachos, burritos** – they're all there. However, the homemade grub does offer a couple of **fun twists** on the to-be-expected tortilla based treats.



We tried a fairly unusual starter. It was sort of similar to a kind of chowder but with a kick and studded with spicy prawns; it brought me back to life after a particularly boozy evening the night before. We rounded off the leisurely lunch with a brownie.

Again, it was a slightly pimped up version of an old favorite as this pud offered up sugar and spice – as it had just touch of chilli in it. It was downright delicious and had us reaching for one last margarita for the road.



Special mention has to go to the Maitre D, Mark. He towed the line between clearly knowing his stuff (and wanting to share it with us) and being attentive enough without us feeling like we had a third person dining with us, which can sometimes be the case. He also pointed out that they have a happy hour. Am I the only one who views winter as the perfect excuse for day drinking? Surely not.

Either way, **we left Slow Mex giggling and gloriously full.** Thanks to the crispy duck tacos that I'm still thinking about, the diet can always wait until tomorrow. I'm just thinking of my winter insulation and working on my extra layer in the meantime.

by @littlemissmadrid

Slow Mex Madrid

- [Facebook](#), [Website](#) & [Instagram](#)
 - **Address:** Calle de San Vicente Ferrer 33
 - **Metro:** Tribunal or Noviciado
 - **Phone:** 915 326 791
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Loveliness at Lateral

When I first moved to Madrid I walked that well trodden path like so many ex-pats had done before me; the month long TEFL course. I rocked up with my Spanish phrase book, some SPF 20 and the overwhelming desire to live abroad. With no set plan (well, with no actual plan at all having quit my job in PR back in London) I quickly got into the groove of my new TEFL timetable; which essentially meant a 3pm finish. As soon as my 'working' day was done, I would wile away afternoons in Plaza Santa Ana.



Plaza Santa Ana

Now I don't spend too much time around that neck of the woods these days, but back then I was literally intoxicated by that square. The beautiful balconies, the long sunny days (I arrived in August) and I even found charm in the guys who play the accordion and then hustle for your change. The large majority of those afternoons were spent on the terraza of [restaurante Lateral](#).

Seriously, the limited savings that I arrived with dwindled at lightning speed thanks to my newfound obsession with their ***croquetas de jamón*** and ***tinto de verano***. It became a spot that I still think of fondly, as it kind of represents those heady first months when everything was an adventure and my sole preoccupation was how many hours could I spend tanning that day and where was I going out that night.



So [Lateral](#) and I have enjoyed an enduring partnership and now that I live on the other side of Gran Via I thought I'd mix

things up and visit one of their other outposts on Calle Fuencarral. I'd heard on the grape vine that it had undergone a recent renovation (and I can't just rely on Pinterest for interiors inspo) so it seemed like a win win.



So onto the décor, it is in a nutshell delightful. But obviously we're talking about a restaurant here, so I can't not mention the food. Lateral is all about the tapas – so you can literally try a little bit of everything in perfectly bite sized portions.

In addition, if you have [visiting guests](#) or you're just a first timer to the city, you'll love that Lateral puts a modern spin on Spanish classics. You can find all the well-known favourites such as **tortilla de patata** and **albondigas** (meatballs); alongside more inventive small plates such as delicious **duck ravioli** and a melt-in-the-mouth **carpaccio**.



Food wise [Lateral](#) is what I would describe as a safe bet. Yes it might not be the most inventive cuisine, but what they offer up always hits the spot. It also doesn't hurt that it's super reasonably priced for a city centre find, and **they serve food all day.**

My friend and I were also pleased as punch to discover that they boast a **happy hour on drinks** – ideal if you enjoy a lunch that's more liquid than most and I can attest that the service is always friendly and fast. Whilst the terraza isn't quite as pleasing on the eye as the Plaza Santa Ana locale, the phrase "it's what's on the inside that counts" that rings true here.



Inside it's an oasis within the city, filled with plenty of plants and enough greenery to make you feel like you're embracing nature, in spite of being mere moments from the hustle and bustle of one of Madrid's main shopping streets. If spontaneity is your thing (let's face it, we're not talking about a country when peeps really plan ahead), restaurante Lateral is the kind of place that you can pitch up at, eat well and feel as though you've sampled a little bit of Spain's finest.

Restaurante Lateral:

- [Website](#) & [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#)
 - **Address:** Calle Fuencarral, 43
 - **Phone:** 915316877
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Cubanismo, a tropical escape in Malasaña

In the warmer months, Madrid becomes inundated with talk of rooftop terraces: which one is the coolest, where's the best view, who has the best drinks? There are the perennial favorites, the ones that always crop up on tourism sites and lists of local secrets. **And then there's Cubanismo.**

On the third floor of the massive concept store and multipurpose complex that is [El Paracaidista](#), **this Cuban-inspired cocktail bar** offers a hidden escape from the busy streets of Malasaña. To enter the building, you'll need to sign in at the front desk, and then journey through displays of chic clothing and artsy accessories to reach the bar itself. It may not actually be on the building's roof... but it makes up for this technicality with an incredible atmosphere.



Once you arrive, you'll be instantly transported back to 20th-century Cuba, or at least a romanticized idea of it. A small indoor area features sofas, mirrors, and old wooden furniture, plus a marble bartop staffed by white-shirted waiters.



The terrace is roomy but still small enough to feel intimate. It features wooden chairs with brightly colored cushions, red umbrellas, and a view of the surrounding rooftops. This isn't the place to go for a panoramic view of the city, but it's cozy and charming in its own way. At night, flickering candles make it especially romantic.



The drink menu is creative and complete, with something for everyone. For the full experience it's essential to order a mojito, which comes in a tall glass with crushed ice, fresh mint leaves, a preserved lime slice, and a touch of Angostura bitters. Other drinks include aperitivos that put an original twist on classics like the Negroni and Bloody Mary. The menu offers various rum drinks, among them the intriguing *Cavalibre* (rum, lime juice, cava, cola syrup, and Angostura) and the *Made in Cuba*, with hints of cucumber and absinthe.

Gin lovers will also find several tempting options, flavored with things like **blackberry liqueur, apricot brandy, and passion fruit purée**. While cocktails are definitely the specialty here, they also offer wine, beer, sangría, and even non-alcoholic takes on classic drinks. If you're hungry, order a snack like guacamole, hummus, *jamón ibérico*, a cheese board, or ice cream for dessert.



Although the prices are slightly above average, they're by no means unreasonable. And **for the entire month of October, 2017, all cocktails and mixed drinks are 2 for 1 during happy hour** (5:00 to 8:00 pm, Tuesday through Friday). This deal also applies to Parq, the full-service restaurant on the floor above—but if I were you, I'd skip the pricey entrées and stick to Cubanismo's drinks and snacks. After spending a couple of hours here, you might never want to leave.

Info

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Elemental Bistro, a local labour of love

Without doubt, we are a generation who want it all and we want it now. So if we're pretty much always used to getting our own way, particularly when it comes not only to dining out but also to dining in (Hello Deliveroo you absolute game changer), then **what is it these days that truly elevates a dining experience from mediocre to marvellous? Well in my humble opinion, it's the service.** The extra *Je Ne Sais Quoi* that turns a 'meh it wasn't bad', to a 'sign me up I want a loyalty card' kind of vibe.

Good food will always be good food, but **the story and the service at [Elemental Bistro](#) is the stuff that money can rarely buy.** Not many 20-somethings these days know what they want to do when they 'grow up.' Us millennials have risen up through the ranks being told that we don't have to stay loyal to a company and await retirement. We can chase our dreams and fulfil no end of goals. The issue being, where do you start?



Someone who faced that quandary head on and has lived to tell the tale is **Sergio**, the 25-year-old owner of the newly opened [Elemental Bistro](#) who spent years living in Paris and has brought some undeniable Gallic charm to the streets of **Malasaña**. 25 years old, I hear you gasp. Yes. I couldn't quite believe it (but pardon the French related pun) I expect him to become quite the *tour de force* when it comes to gastronomy on this side of Gran Via.

Located on **Calle Corredera Baja de San Pablo**, Elemental is in prime position to capitalise on the hoards of hipsters that

descend on this street daily. However, Elemental is far from being the only option for a foodie in that neck of the woods. So Sergio's menu (which is of a **French-Spanish fusion** disposition) is instantaneously eye catching in an area where menus are becoming more than a little generic in style.



It's not just the menu that is set to carve out a niche either. The décor is stripped back yet charming in equal measure. The walls are simplistic and white, with little nods to Parisian style through the flowers adorning the tables, to the antique typewriter that was perched atop a nearby table.

The owner Sergio who, might I add, won me over within minutes (largely due to his outfit and the soft sounds of the *La La Land* soundtrack playing in the background – a surefire winner for me) couldn't be more hands on in his approach as a restaurateur. His knowledge about wine was second to none.



It's worth noting at this point that the wine menu (along with all other drinks) were housed in old camera roll 'holders' for want of a better word. And as I've dined out about as many times as the late Hugh Hefner bagged himself a blonde, I can attest that I've never seen such a quirky and imaginative way to liven up a wine list.

The food was as downright tasty as anything I've sampled in Spain or fancied in France. The **goat cheese and pumpkin croquetas** were dangerously moreish. The duck salad had even a self-confessed carnivore eating her greens and the **Galician**

short rib, well that really requires no explanation.



Let it be told that I am very much in the camp of 'I'm a starter person' rather than being partial to a pud, but **Elemental may have just won the award for the best desert ever** – I may drop round a certificate and everything. It consisted of a chocolate fondant, violet ice cream and decorated with crystalized parma violet type sweets. It was almost too pretty to eat and the plate that it was served on was very nearly swiped by this vintage loving lady.

There's no shortage of fabulous places to eat in Madrid. Having said that, there's far fewer that I don't as much *suggest* that you should visit, but I positively implore you to frequent. Kudos to Sergio for marrying not just two nations (but two cuisines) and as a result, he brings the panache of Paris to the people of Madrid.

Info

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